

Understanding the Dalā'il An-Nubuwwah of Muhammad (PBUH)

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**ABSTRACT**

Last few decades has witnessed an increased attention in the subject recognized as *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwah* (Proofs of Prophethood), being discussed in the academic and non-academic communities among the non-Muslims and Muslims world. This interest has grown in part, due to the rise in the radical, violent, and militant extremism of modern times, which emerged in severe reactions at the global level. This has created worries and doubts, leading to horrible incidents. Besides, it led to the accusation, that outlook of the world be subject to form a framework for “peaceful coexistence” among the civilizations of the major religions of the contemporary world. Nevertheless, the “Proof of Prophethood” is indeed a vast subject which can be discussed in many ways. Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have acquired several approaches to study and examine the prophetic claim of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. There are numerous scholars who wrote in the past, and remain writing on this subject, in the form of comprehensive books and volumes. In view of this scenario, this article humbly attempts to identify, and understand the “Proofs of Muhammad’s Prophethood” in the framework of significant, documented events of Islamic History. The approach followed throughout this treatise is entirely unbiased.

**Keywords:** Dalā'il an-Nubuwwah, Muhammadﷺ, Prophethood, Proofs, Islamic History, Seerah.

**Introduction**

The word prophet means, a person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the will of God. And, the title of Prophethood signifies a person who speaks by divine inspiration or as the interpreter through whom the will of a God is expressed. This interpretation or understanding varies among the religious philosophies, found in today’s world. In this context,

Prophethood in Islam is an indispensable belief, based on the dogma, that a series of messengers came to for guidance to humans, to call towards the straight path. In this sequence of Messengers and Prophets, Muhammad ﷺ stands as the last and final Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

It is commonly believed, that the Prophets are distinguished people that (God) Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted be He.) chooses amongst the people. They inform people about the religion (Dīn) i.e., a way of life based on the commands and prohibitions of (God) Allāh<sup>2</sup>, called Shari‘ah. Glad tidings and reward of both Worlds, is their incentive, for doing GOOD and abstaining from BAD deeds; and the information and warning of severe punishment in the next life, to the unbelievers who do not submit to the injunctions of God and the Apostle.<sup>3</sup> This point can be understood from the following verses of the Qur’ān, mentioned in the footnote.<sup>4</sup>

### **Proofs of Muhammad’s Prophethood ﷺ**

In the following section, we shall attempt to identify, understand and highlight the “Proofs of Muhammad’s Prophethood” ﷺ in the framework of significant, documented events of Islamic History, with an impartial approach. The classification of the proofs cited in the following treatise, is the choice of the authors.

#### **1. Al-Nabi al-Ummī (the Unlettered Apostle) ﷺ**

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> proof of Muhammad’s Prophethood, endorsed by Qur’ān, that he was bestowed with the title of “al-Nabi al-Ummī” by (God) Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted be He.) It means that Muhammad ﷺ was an unlettered man, which means that he was unable to produce any high-class scholarly literature like the Qur’ān.<sup>5</sup>

The ‘unlettered prophet’ is the title used by scripture itself in al-A‘rāf 7:157 for Muhammad, PBUH, which translated as: the prophet deputed without a book, or the messenger for the Muslim community.<sup>6</sup>

1 Dagobert D. Runes, The Dictionary of Philosophy, New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., u.d.; <https://islamonline.net/en/11-logical-proofs-of-muhammads-prophethood/>; <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199541430.001.0001/acref-9780199541430>

2 Subhāna hū wa ta‘āla. مَبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Glory be to Him and Exalted be He.

3 The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, Edited by: John L. Esposito, 2004

4 “We send the messengers only to give good news and to warn: so those who believe and mend (their lives), - upon them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” Surah al-An‘am 6:48, and Surah al-Ahzab 33: 21.

5 Al-Qur’ān, Surah Al-A‘rāf 7:157.

6 Al-Qur’ān, Surah al-A‘rāf 7:157.

In Arabic language, the word *UMM* has three meanings: mother, source, and foundation. From this the title or term *UMMI* has been extracted or derived. Again, in Arabic language, this word gives three connotations, or being used in three meanings i.e., motherly, uneducated, illiterate. The Holy Qur'ān has used this term or title 'al-nabū al-ummi' for him, as 'Unlettered Prophet,' which means that he was unable to read and write.

Various analysts have drawn the label to the noun *ummah*, which suggests a prime communal assigning a common holy inclination. With this logic and understanding, 'the forecaster sent to an uneducated public,' or a civic, who never saw sacred scripture, is called Al-Nabī al-Ummī.<sup>1</sup>

He (SAW), was incapable of reading and writing. This was his condition till the time of his demise. Due to this inability, he was not able to read the previous religious scriptures. It should be noted, that after attaining the age of forty years, Muhammad ﷺ started receiving the divine revelation. Although, the news of his arrival was mentioned in Torah, he was unaware of his future status as a Prophet. Another important thing to be observed as a proof of Muhammad's Prophethood is, that commands revealed in the Torah, and the scripture of Moses, and in the teachings of Jesus preserved in the Gospel, are the practically the same, as delivered by the tongue of Muhammad PBUH, in the shape of Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Amazing Predictions

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, documented by Qur'ān, Aḥādīth and Islamic History.<sup>3</sup> Predictions are the act of saying what will or might happen in the future. Prediction is a statement about what will or might happen in the future causing astonishment, great wonder, or surprise.<sup>4</sup>

After his demise, many of the incidents and events happened in the Muslim history, which were predicted by him ﷺ. The martyrdom of his two great companions and khalifahs: Usman and Umar, incident of Karbala, and martyrdom of Hussain ibn Ali, are a few examples to prove the Prophethood

1 The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, Edited by: John L. Esposito, 2004. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195125580.001.0001/acref-9780195125580>

2 Shibli Nomani, Seerat Un Nabi, Islamabad: Book corner, 2017.

3 Shibli Nomani, Seerat Un Nabi, Islamabad: Book corner, 2017; also see, Zia Ul Nabi, Muhammad Karam Shah, Lahore: Zia ul Quran, 2019.

4 Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Scotland, 2010; <https://islamonline.net/en/references-of-muhammad-in-the-torah/> [26 July, 2022]

of Muhammad (SAW).<sup>1</sup>

Prophetic farsightedness; predictions about the fall of Roman; Zoroastrian exclusion; omission of Persia empire; and dominance of Islam as a creed and global life code. All these events happened exactly as Muhammad ﷺ forecasted for the future.<sup>2</sup>

At the commencement of Surat Ar-Rum, the God Almighty, disclosed to his Prophet PBUH, that the Christians, after their defeat, will again be victorious in the coming years, in these words, Alif Lam Mīm. Romans have been conquered, today in the land, but they will sooner be victorious. This example of Qur'ān, suffice the proof of the Muhammad's Prophecy.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Al-Qur'ān (The Book)

This is the 3rd proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, recognized by Qur'ān, Aḥādīth and Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, of all times. How can an uneducated and orphan, create the highest form of literature "Qur'ān," like stanzas, poems? The only possible answer can be, that it is a miracle and blessing of the Lord of universe on His servant, Muhammad, who revealed Qur'ān on him, in Arabic language, which is unique in its expressiveness and clarity. Qur'ān challenged the Arabs of that period when it was being revealed, and is challenging to the humans of the future, to create a literature like Qur'ān. This challenge has never been met by any human till today. The reason for this is very simple to understand. Qur'ān is not a man-made literature. Its eloquent language, fluency, beauty, and communication power are matchless. Note this claim of Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted be He), in Surah Al-Isra: Utter, if the all of humanity along with and jinni join hand to create like this book, they cannot not prepare a literature like this, even if they join to help and support.<sup>4</sup>

### 4. Perfect Moral Conduct

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, peace upon him ﷺ, recognized and documented in the history, by the Muslims and Non-Muslims. The most difficult thing for a human is to practice a moderate,

1 The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, Edited by: John L. Esposito, 2004.

2 A Concise Encyclopedia of Islam, by: Gordon D. Newby, Oxford 2002; also see: The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, Edited by: John L. Esposito, 2004.

3 Surah ar-Rūm 30:1-3.

4 Surah Al-Isra 17:88.

pious, and noble behavior throughout his life time. Historical records affirm the noble life of the Prophet, PBUH, as a perfect example of man who was upright, sympathetic, honest, courageous, generous, person, who was far away from all wrong acts, and self-disciplined and moderate in all worldly affairs. A humble person, totally motivated to get the reward and goodwill of the hereafter from his Lord. A God fearing, watchful, and honest man in all his actions and dealings of life.<sup>1</sup>

#### **5. One of the Most Lovable Person of the World**

This is the 5th proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, recognized and documented in the history, by the Muslims and Non-Muslims. The historians generally agree, that Muhammad ibn Abdullah, is the unique personalities in human history, who has received the highest level of regard, love, honor, and compliance by his follower in all matters of life. They would love sacrifice their lives for their prophet. They love him more than their own life and their parents. Even those who have not ever seen him, respect him, follow him, and love him, till today.<sup>2</sup>

#### **6. One of the Most Influential Personality of the World**

This is the 6th proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, peace upon him ﷺ, accepted recognized, certified, and documented in the history, by the Muslims and Non-Muslims. The historiographers of Muhammad ibn Abdullah, largely approve his exclusive personality, who stands at the highest-level of compliance by his believers in all matters of life, even after the departure from this world. There is a consensus among them that, he is one of the most influential personalities of the World.<sup>3</sup>

One of the contemporary Western historians, Michael H. Hart, has placed Prophet Muhammad, PBUH, on the top of the list of the most influential personalities of the history. In his book, he selected people, on a ranking of who had done the most to influence the world.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Shibli Nomani, Seerat Un Nabi, Islamabad: Book corner, 2017; also see, Zia Ul Nabi, Muhammad Karam Shah, Lahore: Zia ul Qur'an, 2019.

2 Shibli Nomani, Seerat Un Nabi, Islamabad: Book corner, 2017; also see, Zia Ul Nabi, Muhammad Karam Shah, Lahore: Zia ul Quran, 2019; also see, Sahih al-Bukhari, See, book 62, Hadith 38, love of Prophet; also see, Book, Sahih Muslim, See, book 44, Hadith 108, love of Prophet; Naeem Siddiqui, Mohsin e Insaniyat, Lahore: Islamic Publications, 2019.

3 Naeem Siddiqui, Mohsin e Insaniyat, Lahore: Islamic Publications, 2019.

4 Micheal H. Hart, The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History, New York: Hart Publishing Company, 1978.

## 7. One of the Most Followed Person of the World

This is the 7th proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, understandably and judiciously documented in the history, by the social scientists.<sup>1</sup> According to the latest consensus, Muhammad (SAW), is being followed by 1.9 billion people around the world.<sup>2</sup>

His popularity and acceptance as a Prophet can be understood by this ground reality, that these 1.9 billion Muslims call themselves the believers and followers of him. They cheerfully follow and observe all the sunnah i.e., his saying, actions, and permission by silence, which includes all his religious, social, economic, and collective or political traditions and practices. To this day the Muslims attempt to follow or copy their Prophet's life in their sleeping, eating, drinking, dressing, and washing behavior.<sup>3</sup>

On different occasions, the Holy Qur'an has advised and ordained the Muslims to follow the instructions and actions of Prophet Muhammad, peace upon him ﷺ, in these meanings: O people you have an excellent example of conduct, in following the Apostle Muhammad, peace upon him, if you expect to meet your Lord on the day judgement.<sup>4</sup>

## 8. Devoted Supporters

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, based on documented historical facts.

From the very beginning of his emergence as a prophet, peace upon him ﷺ, people of different races, tribes, status, standards, colors, and languages accepted him as a prophet of God. These believers in the past had different faiths, like Christianity, Judaism, paganism, idol worship, and atheism. Among those who accepted Islam were well recognized for their right judgements, wisdoms, knowledge, and providence. These wise persons accepted the message of Muhammad, thoughtfully by witnessing his candor and marvels. They accepted Islam without any pressure and without any urge of worldly benefits. Undeniably, some of them were socially and economically very weak, and for this they had to face the oppression of the

1 The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, Edited by: John L. Esposito, 2004

2 Earth is home to **more than 1.9 billion** Muslims. Islam is also the world's fastest-growing religion. The Islamic population is mainly split between 1.5 billion Sunni Muslims and 240-340 million Shia Muslims, with the remainder scattered among a few smaller denominations.

For details see, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/muslim-majority-countries> [27-07-2022]

3 <https://islamonline.net/en/proofs-of-muhammads-prophethood/> [27-07-2022]

4 Surah Al-Ahzab 33:21.

enemies, for supporting the Muhammad, peace upon him. Despite of all the hardships they denied to abandon the path of Islam. They tolerated all the pain and sufferings for the sake, love, and reward of from Allāh, Glory be to Him and Exalted be He.<sup>1</sup>

### **Candid Communication**

This is the 9<sup>th</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood. All the known impartial classical books inscribed on the life history of Muhammad ibn Abdullah, postulate, submit, and advocate the sincerity, honesty, and absence of deception in the life of last Prophet Muhammad, peace upon him.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the above, it is worth noting that the knowledge and information disseminated to the readers in Qur'ān, cannot be created by the human competence and human perception. This miracle has been witnessed and certified by the wise and knowledgeable people of this known world.<sup>3</sup>

It shall be interesting to note at this point that linguistics is defined as the study of human dialog including the units, nature, structure, and modification of language. In the same context, the modern experts of etymology, generally consider seven qualities for a formal candid communication i.e., Conciseness (Briefness), Correctness, Concreteness, Clarity, Completeness, Consideration, and Courtesy.<sup>4</sup>

In the light of above discussion, it can be stated with confidence and without hesitation, that one of the prominent and noticeable attributes of the Muhammad, peace upon him ﷺ was his candid communication. Sayyid ul Mursaleen (SAW), communicated, and established each minute regulation, suitable for the improvement of life and civilization, in religion, sociology, economics, and politics, with the will and guidance of Allāh, Glory be to Him.<sup>5</sup>

### **9. Notable Doctrines**

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood. It is incredible for the human cognizance to understand the correct spiritual, social, economic, and political perceptions, engrossed beneath the teachings of the last Apostle,

1 Shibli Noman, Seerat Un Nabi, Islamabad: Book corner, 2017; also see, Zia Ul Nabi, Muhammad Karam Shah, Lahore: Zia ul Quran, 2019.

2 Zia Ul Nabi, Muhammad Karam Shah, Lahore: Zia ul Quran, 2019.

3 Azhar Abbas Khawaja, Ijaz ul Quran, Karachi: Idara Sawt ul Haq, Paramount Books, u.d.

4 <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/linguistics>

5 Khurshid Ahmad, Islam: Its Meaning & Message, UK: Islamic Foundation Leicester, 2nd ed., 1992; Surah Al-Mā'idah 5:50

that take wisdom, morality, besides nobleness, with which he was sent by the Lord of this universe. Muhammad ﷺ, disseminated notable doctrines, for Man-God relations and Man-Man relations, suitable for all the humankind of this planet. His dogmas-included relationships among kith and kin, and even rivals, wildlife, flora, and non-living things.<sup>1</sup>

Almighty Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted be He.) clearly mentioned in Qur'ān which means, that anywhere is no living organism on this planet or a fowl with arms who sails in the sky, all of them are societies as you; nothing has been abandoned in the scripture; Lord will gather all his creation.<sup>2</sup> This is the message of the Creator of this world, and whatever is in it, reminds us that no creation of this universe can create similar teachings and understandings. Therefore, it undoubtedly confirms that, Prophet Muhammad, peace upon him ﷺ, did not invented his religion – Islam, but it was Allāh, Glory be to Him and Exalted be He, who created this unbelievable cosmos, the masterpiece of architecture and excellence.<sup>3</sup>

### 10. Heavenly Commandments

The 11th proof of Ahmad's Prophethood, is based on the spiritual meanings, that all the commandments, laws, decrees, and rulings given by the last and final Prophet, are meant for the enhancement of Man-God relationships; the Supreme Being, Creator of this universe, Allāh, Glory be to Him and Exalted be He. In simple words, all divine laws, are by the God and for the God. This has been clearly professed in the following verses of Qu'rān in Surah An-Najm 53:1-7; which means this, promise of setting of star; your fellow has not been wandered and mistaken; he (Muhammad) does not say anything with his own desire; but our revelation is conveyed to you by your Lord; somewhat authoritative has been communicated to him; He (Allāh) has the enormous wisdom ---; He (Allāh) is on the peak of skyline.<sup>4</sup>

To elaborate, the above point, divine commandment is a law that is perceived as deriving from a transcendent source. Simply, it means that Allāh, Glory

1 Naeem Siddiqui, Mohsin e Insiyat, Lahore: Islamic Publications, 2019.

2 Surah Al-An'ām 6:38.

3 Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, Towards Understanding the Qur'an, UK: Islamic Foundation Leicester, 2009.

4 Surah An-Najm 53: 1-7. Surah An-Najm (53:1) By the star when it sets. (53:2) your companion has neither strayed nor is he deluded; (53:3) nor does he speak out of his desire. (53:4) This is nothing but a revelation that is conveyed to him, (53:5) something that a very powerful one has imparted to him, (53:6) one endowed with immense wisdom. He came forth and stood poised, (53:7) being on the higher horizon.

be to Him and Exalted be He, has created the cosmos and terrain; revealed his just religion comprised of all in useful guidelines for the entire human race, to his chosen man, Muhammad PBUH. It is beyond the limits of human imagination, imitation, and understanding about the making of celestial laws, as the creation of universe and land, and about their creation. Similarly, Man cannot create whatsoever, what is in the power of Allāh to create, they can't make any laws, similar to those revealed to Allāh's last Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him.<sup>1</sup>

### **11. Continuation of God's Message**

This is the 12<sup>th</sup> proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, documented and supported by Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, Islamic History, Isra'iliyyat, Biblical records, Historiography, and Artifactual history.<sup>2</sup>

For instance, the available facts of the past relics, is defined by the archaeologists as - anything that was the result of a past human activity. We are using the same methodology, as in the past to explore the historical facts, for our timely needs.<sup>3</sup>

Allāh — Glory be to Him and Exalted be He — in Qur'ān, has mentioned in many places, about the accounts of previous scriptures and nations, in the form of parables and similitudes, for the sake of reminder and God consciousness to the Muslims and the general readers, through His chosen Prophet — Muhammad, PBUH. With a slight difference of language and narration, these descriptions are exactly giving the same message, as they were revealed to Moses in Torah and revealed to Jesus in Gospel; O' Allāh! bestow Peace and Blessings upon them.<sup>4</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The primary sources to reach the accounts of Prophet Muhammad's life are Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. And the secondary sources are the books on Sīrah, Āthār, Islamic History, biblical history, and the history of religions. The unbiased study adopted in this treatise, to identify, and understand the "Proofs of Muhammad's Prophethood," articulates that Prophet Muhammad

1 Sayyid Abul A'la Mawduḍī, *Sunnat Ki Aaini Haisiat* (Urdu), Lahore: Islamic Publications, 2010.

2 Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Scotland, 2010; also see, <https://islamonline.net/en/references-of-muhammad-in-the-torah>

3 Dagobert D. Runes, *The Dictionary of Philosophy*, New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., u.d.; <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>

4 Khurshid Ahmad, *Islam: Its Meaning & Message*, UK: Islamic Foundation Leicester, 2nd ed., 1992.

(SAW) ﷺ, was, is, and will hold the status of Prophet, in global history, till the last day of this world's existence.